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**AMENDMENT**

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1-21. (CANCELLED)

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An article having on at least a portion of a surface a coating consisting essentially of, in order:

a nickel layer;

a strike layer consisting essentially of zirconium, titanium or zirconium-titanium alloy directly contacting said nickel layer; and

an outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound, or zirconium-titanium alloy compound directly contacting said strike layer, and said outer layer is uncoated.

23. (ORIGINAL) The article of claim 22 wherein said compound is selected from carbides, oxides, nitrides and carbonitrides.

24. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 23 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound consists essentially of zirconium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound.

25. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 24 wherein said compound is nitrides.

26. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 24 wherein said strike layer consisting essentially of zirconium, titanium or zirconium-titanium alloy consists essentially of zirconium or zirconium-titanium alloy.

27. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 25 wherein said strike layer consisting essentially of zirconium, titanium or zirconium-titanium alloy consists essentially of zirconium or zirconium-titanium alloy.

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28. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 22, wherein said ~~substrate~~ the article is copper, steel, brass, zinc, aluminum or nickel.
29. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 22, wherein said ~~substrate~~ the article is aluminum or zinc.
30. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The article of claim 22, wherein said strike layer consisting essentially of zirconium, titanium or zirconium-titanium alloy directly contacting said nickel layer has a thickness between 0.25 millionths of an inch and 50 millionths of an inch.
31. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 22, wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound has a thickness between 0.1 millionths of an inch and 30 millionths of an inch.
32. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An article having a coating on at least a portion of a surface of said article, said article comprising:
- a substrate consisting essentially of zinc or aluminum;
  - a nickel layer;
  - a strike layer consisting essentially of zirconium, titanium or zirconium-titanium alloy directly contacting said nickel layer and having a thickness less than 15 millionths of an inch; and
  - an outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound, or zirconium-titanium alloy compound directly contacting said strike layer, and said outer layer is uncoated.
33. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 32 wherein said compound is selected from carbides, oxides, nitrides and carbonitrides.
34. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 33 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound, or zirconium-titanium alloy compound consists essentially of zirconium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound.

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35. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 34 wherein said compound is nitrides.
36. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 34 wherein said strike layer consisting essentially of zirconium, titanium or zirconium-titanium alloy consists essentially of zirconium or zirconium-titanium alloy.
37. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 35 wherein said strike layer consisting essentially of zirconium, titanium or zirconium-titanium alloy consists essentially of zirconium or zirconium-titanium alloy.
38. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 32, wherein the article is a faucet.
39. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 32, wherein the article is a doorknob.
40. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 32 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound has a thickness between 0.1 millionths of an inch and 30 millionths of an inch.
41. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 32 wherein said strike layer has a thickness greater than 0.25 millionths of an inch.
42. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 22 wherein the article is a faucet.
43. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 22 wherein the article is a doorknob.
44. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 24 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound consists essentially of zirconium-titanium alloy compound.

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45. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 22 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound consists essentially of titanium compound.
46. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 23 wherein said compound is oxides.
47. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 22 wherein said nickel layer directly contacts the surface of the article.
48. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 34 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound consists essentially of zirconium-titanium alloy compound.
49. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 32 wherein said strike layer consisting essentially of zirconium, titanium or zirconium-titanium alloy consists essentially of zirconium or zirconium-titanium alloy.
50. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 49 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound consists essentially of zirconium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound.
51. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 32 wherein said outer layer consisting essentially of zirconium compound, titanium compound or zirconium-titanium alloy compound consists essentially of titanium compound.
52. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 33 wherein said compound is oxides.
53. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article of claim 32 wherein said nickel layer directly contacts the substrate.

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